



AVIAN INFLUENZA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS TESTING TO PREVENT AVIAN INFLUENZA IN YOUR FLOCK

http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/ah/diseases/avian_influenza.html

How is Avian Influenza spread?

Avian Influenza (AI) can be spread through the respiratory secretions and feces of infected birds. Some birds, notably waterfowl, are believed to be the reservoirs of Avian Influenza and can shed the virus in their feces without showing symptoms of the disease. Exposure of birds to infected poultry, contaminated poultry equipment, vehicles, and people who have been on AI-infected farms also pose risks for introducing AI into New Jersey. Once introduced, the disease can spread quickly from bird to bird by direct or indirect contact.

What are the symptoms of AI in birds?

Birds affected with any form of AI may show one or more of the following:

- Sudden death without any other clinical signs
- Lack of energy and appetite, depression
- Decreased egg production
- Soft-shelled or misshapen eggs
- Swelling of the head, eyelids, comb, wattles, and hocks
- Purple discoloration of the wattles, combs, and legs
- Nasal discharge
- Coughing, sneezing, or gasping for air
- Lack of coordination
- Diarrhea

How long can the AI virus remain infectious?

AI virus can remain infectious in feces for 7 days at 68° F and 35 days at 40° F, and can survive indefinitely in frozen material. One gram of contaminated manure contains enough virus to infect one million birds.

What do I do if I have sick birds?

Anyone with sick birds should call the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) for testing at (609) 292-3965, especially if many birds are sick or dying.

- There are many other causes of death in birds, so just because a bird dies, it does not automatically mean that the cause is AI. It is best to have it tested.

If I don't have any sick or dying birds, can I still get my flock tested for AI?

Yes, you may still have your birds tested for AI.

How can I arrange for my birds to be tested?

To arrange for flock testing, contact the NJDA Division of Animal Health at (609) 292-3965 to schedule an appointment.

All testing of birds is performed by animal health officials.

An appointment is made and the tester will come to the location of your flock to test your birds. The tester will follow basic biosecurity protocol by wearing clean coveralls, gloves and disinfected boots.

You will be asked to assist the tester by holding the bird(s) during the sample collection.

If the test results are all negative, a certificate of negative status for AI will be issued to you. If any test is suspect or positive, the sample will be sent to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory for further testing.

To arrange for continuous testing of your flock, you can participate in the NJ Monitored Flock Program.

What is the NJ Monitored Flock Program?

For owners interested in participating in the New Jersey Monitored Flock Program, which is part of the state's voluntary Poultry Health Assurance Program, contact the NJDA at (609) 292-3965 for more information, including the Monitored Flock Program brochure.

State and Federal Agency Contact Information:

New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Health

(609) 292-3965 – Office & After-Hours Emergency

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish and Wildlife

(609) 292-2965 - Office
1-877-927-6337 - Emergency Hotline

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Infectious and Zoonotic Diseases

(609) 588-3121 - Office
(609) 392-2020 - After-Hours Emergency

USDA—APHIS, Veterinary Services, New Jersey

(609) 259-8387 – Office & Emergency

USDA—APHIS, Wildlife Services, New Jersey

(908) 735-5654 – Office
(908) 623-7400 – After-Hours Emergency